

WAR, LOSS, AND RESILIENCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF GAFUR GULYAM AND HEMINGWAY

Baxtigul Poyanova

a student of Uzbekistan state world university,

baxtigulpoyanova38@gmail.com

Abstract: This comparative study examines depictions of war, loss, and resilience in *Killed Piave—July 8, 1918*, by Ernest Hemingway and *Sen Yetim Emassan (You're Not an Orphan)* by Gafur Gulyam. Both authors explore the far-reaching effects of warfare on the human psyche based on personal experiences on the battlefield. Hemingway's composition reflects the immediate, individual agony of a soldier undergoing a confrontation with death, while Gulyam's poem offers the collective hopefulness and solidarity stemming from national hardships. Through literary analysis, this article explores how each poet engenders resilience in light of loss and brings this to a fuller understanding of how humanity as a collective walks through and responds to war.

Keywords: war, poem, Ernest Hemingway, Gafur Gulyam, cultural views, loss, resilience, comparative literature

Introduction

Literature has long offered a great deal of opportunity to explore both human nature and societal responses to war. This article discusses the common themes of war, loss, and resilience, represented in the poetry of American writer Ernest Hemingway and Uzbek poet Gafur Gulyam, specifically through the analysis of *Killed Piave—July 8, 1918*, by Hemingway and *Sen Yetim Emassan* by Gafur Gulyam. After examining the two poems, it becomes evident how exposure to various cultural backgrounds shapes the identity of literary forms of resilience in the context of warfare.

Gafur Gulyam: *Sen Yetim Emassan*

Gafur Gulyam, a well-known Uzbek poet, wrote *Sen Yetim Emassan* during the Soviet-German war, which was a defining stage of national catastrophe. The poem solidified the notions of Uzbek unity and joint struggles during the war. Gulyam's history of being an orphan, combined with his war experiences, adds depth and sincerity to his work. *Sen Yetim Emassan* speaks to a child of the war, a parentless victim while trying to console that child by stressing the collective compassion of the nation. The poem starts with these gentle words:

Sen yetim emassan, Tinchlan, jigarim.

Are you an orphan? Calm down, dear!

These words set the atmosphere of consolation, stating that the speaker is an authoritative figure. Gulyam goes ahead to explain the surrogate family being the nation:

Quyoshday mehribon

Vataning-onang, Zaminday vazmin-u, Mehnatkash, mushfiq...

Your motherland is kind as the sun, as patient and hard-working as the earth...

With this metaphor, Gulyam makes the motherland out to be a nurturing and loyal personification, ready to offer solace and comfort when chaos surrounds them. The way Gulyam depicts hope to overcome adversity is communal, which shows broad unity in changing the lives of those impacted directly or indirectly by the war (Gulyam, 1976).

Hemingway: Killed Piave—July 8, 1918

The basis of the poem lies in Hemingway's personal experiences in World War I. At age 18, Hemingway worked as an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross on the Italian front. He was shot by an Austrian mortar shell while supplying Italian soldiers with sustenance on July 8, 1918. This gruesome event served as an impetus for many of his works, including the poem under discussion (Dearborn, 2017).

Hemingway discretely captures the immediate sorrow of a soldier witnessing the death of a friend in Piave. The outspoken sequence reveals the grisliness of the battlefield:

The night we lay on the bridge; the night we lay on the bridge...

The recurrence of the phrase accentuates the dreadful reminiscences and specifics of such a night. The illustration of themselves in the scene indicates pity and fragility for one's life in the face of war.

Hemingway's blunt diction, which lacks figures of speech, paints the gruesome reality of war vividly. The poem continues:

Two men shot dead close in front of us, the splinters and the night...

In this excerpt, death versus the surroundings relates to the constant risk and the delicate balance between life and death. The loss or destruction in this case is acute, as seen in the death of a comrade (Hemingway, 1929).

Comparative Analysis

Different Cultural Views on War in Gafur Gulyam and Ernest Hemingway's Poetry. Culture is a defining factor in how an artist or a writer portrays a theme such as war, tragedy, and survival in the form of poetry. Both Gulyam and Hemingway had firsthand experiences of war, but their cultures heavily dictated how they reacted to it. While Gulyam's poetry is centered around Uzbek collectivism and Soviet ideology, Hemingway's reflects Western individualism and existentialism (Dowling, 1993).

The Community and the Nation.

One of the most interesting differences between *Sen Yetim Emassan* and *Killed Piave*—July 8, 1918 is how they define community and the nation as a whole.

Gulyam's *Uzbek-Soviet Influence*. Gulyam's poem reflects Soviet patriotism, which was prevalent in Uzbek literature at the time. In Uzbek culture, where there are strong ethnic and familial bonds, suffering is often seen as a shared experience rather than a solitary struggle. This is evident in his reassurance to the orphan child:

Sen yetim emassan, Tinchlan, jigarim.

Are you an orphan? Calm down, dear!

The child's loss is understood as national trauma rather than personal grief, reinforcing the idea of the collective family in Soviet literature (Rakhimov, 1983).

Hemingway's *Western Individualism*. Hemingway, on the other hand, portrays battle as an isolating encounter. His writing captures the existentialist thought that dominated Western literature in the early twentieth century, suggesting that a person has no choice but to suffer alone (White, 2004). This is evident in *Killed Piave*—July 8, 1918:

Two men shot dead close in front of us, the splinters and the night ...

Here, community is not invoked, on reassurance – only sheer reality. The war experience he depicts in "*A Farewell to Arms*" (1929) demonstrates how he attempted to resist nationalist myths. Like Gulyam, who later on ascribed meaning to pulling together, Hemingway's characters almost always repudiate central narratives of heroism.

The personification of the Homeland.

The two poets feature the concept of the motherland prominently but differ in their interpretation due to cultural reasons.

Gulyam: *The Homeland as a mother*. In *Uzbeks and Soviet literature* in general, what stands out is the portrayal of the land or homeland as a caring mother. In "*Sen Yetim Emassan*" Gulyam writes:

Quyoshday mehribon Vataning onang, Zaminday vazminu Mehnatkash, mushfiq...

Your motherland is as kind as the sun, As patient and hardworking as the earth...

This representation encapsulates older Uzbek ideas where the land is intertwined with the family unit. Gulyam's work "*Selected Poems*" (Gulyam, 1976) is an example of where Gulyam attempts to express empathy through maternal images.

Hemingway: *The Homeland as Indifferent*. Hemingway does not romanticize the homeland. In many of his works, including *A Farewell to Arms*, the idea of a "motherland" is either absent or seen as a distant, bureaucratic entity that does not care for its soldiers. Hemingway's characters, like Frederic Henry, reject national loyalty in favor of personal survival. His poetry follows the same philosophy—war is chaotic, and survival is often a matter of luck rather than patriotism.

Conclusion

The examination of Gafur Gulyam's *Sen Yetim Emassan* and Ernest Hemingway's *Killed Piave—July 8, 1918* reveals that while both poets depict war and loss, their perspectives are shaped by their cultural and historical contexts. Gulyam's work embodies collective resilience and patriotism, portraying the motherland as a nurturing force. Hemingway, however, focuses on the solitary, harsh reality of war. While their approaches differ, both poets acknowledge the psychological impact of war. Gulyam's emphasis on shared struggle contrasts with Hemingway's focus on individual suffering, reflecting broader cultural ideologies on war and resilience (Yusupov, 1985). This analysis relies on a single poem from each author, which leads to its primary limitation. A case study analysis would allow a more informed view of the understanding of arguments taking a wider scope of work of Gulyam and Hemingway into consideration.

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